



From Nightmare to Comfort by ad-iuficium

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Summary: Nightmares for Joyce were a common occurrence. But seeing Hop die the same way Bob did...made her seek comfort to the former of the two. Leads up to Jopper. Two to three chapters long. Enjoy.

1. Chapter 1

A/N

I really have no idea how I ended up here. I really didn't want to watch Stranger Things as I'm scared of my own shadow but hell, I loved it! I watched it for the first time the previous week and since then I've rewatched season 2 three times! And I have no problem rewatching it. I'm addicted! Anyway, this is my first fic in this fandom so be kind. It's Jopper all the way! If you don't adore Joyce and Hop then get out of here. :)

Disclaimer: I own nothing.

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The human body shouldn't be able to take on that kind of stress and agony.

The seconds passed while Bob tried to get away from the four-legged monster, later known as demodog. He gave her a triumphant smile after closing the damn brown doors and the relief that passed through her whole being was exhilarating.

But then a crash was heard and a demodog lunched on Bob's unadulterated body. Breath left her again. Cold sweat drenched her ivory skin once more. Watching the fight get out of him, the light from his eyes disappear. His life being so brutally taken and the blood filling the empty floor, covering it with a scarlet veil.

She was frozen on the spot. She was breathing but didn't feel like she did. She should be able to move but in reality she was paralyzed. Her eyes glued to the scene in front of her.

She could hear gunshots from behind her as more devious creatures entered the reception, headed to the bloody feast going on the previously identified as Bob Newsby's form.

Though this time, more demodogs appeared. They were headed her way and now Joyce had nothing else to do to defend herself. Nothing. Her

limps in place, stuck in paralyzed fear and agony. Unmovable grief from the remnants of the dead man on the floor that once vacated her couch and laughed his heart out while watching Mr Mom.

But the creatures passed her in their wake for fresh blood. Fresh opened and cut flesh to feast upon. If not her then who? Who else would they take away from her?

Like an unknown force had given her a slap, her whole body without her command changed direction, facing away from Bob's remains. She could see Hopper losing the fight with the creatures and falling to the floor with a shout.

No! Not him too! No!

"No!" Joyce awoke with a start. She looked around her room, glad that it was just a nightmare. Still, the feelings attached to it didn't leave her immediately like the previous nights she woke up from these bad dreams drenched with sweat and tears.

Oh, no, not this time. The view, so easily forgotten and buried before, resurfaced. Hopper, her dear Hop, laying identically to Bob's dead form on the white floor of the entry of that fucking building. His blue eyes, empty from any emotion, open and left to stare at the ceiling. His blood this time covering the floor.

Joyce opened her eyes again to escape from this memore lane. She had this urgent need to see him, touch him, smell him and see for herself that he was alive and well. His heart in its rightful place, beating rhythmically.

Thank God, Jonathan and Will were at the Wheeler's residence for the night. El's restricted outings required enclosed areas for the party to meet and Mike's basement was ideal. Hence the sleepover. Some of Hawkins resident's knew that the little girl was the Chief's daughter but still her outings weren't common. She'd listed for the new school year along with the boys but she still had many things to learn till then.

Joyce put on her light cardigan, her shoes and grabbed her keys. She didn't know what she'd tell Hopper exactly but all she knew was that

she needed to be near him and to really feel him. To see for herself that he was real and there, in the actual land of living.

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A/N

I hope you'd like it so far. It'll be two or three chapters long, resulting into Jopper, obviously. It'll get better. Thank you for your time and please remember that while reviews are optional, they are appreciated.

Thanks,

Andriana, Greece

2. Chapter 2

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Hopper was up for more than an hour.

Another nightmare had woken him up. They weren't that regular nowadays. Seeing for himself nearly everyday that El, Joyce, Will and the rest of the so-called party were fine put his mind at ease. But nightmares still returned once in a while. More like twice a week. El would be here and comforting him with a hug and cup of warm chocolate.

This night however, she wasn't there. And he was glad. He woke up shouting Joyce's name. His nightmares most of the times lately were the deaths of El or Joyce. Or his inability to save Will. Rarely did Sara enter these dreams. He thought about her but having El here, his second and probably last chance at redeem himself made him a better person.

He went out of the cabin and lit a cigarette.

He'd stop smoking at El's insistence but he kept a pack for emergencies. And shared trauma. El had prompted Joyce to stop smoking too, so they suffered together. Even if it was hard at first he was better in every way now. His diet changed and thus his body also. They went for long walks on weekends and restricted their Ego-Extravaganzas to once a week. El was going to start school in a few months and Hop was worried. But thus far everything seemed to be fine.

After a while he went back inside. He scratched on his bed and after some while sleep took him again. Till what seemed to be like seconds later. The not-so-secret-now knock was heard from the front door. Hop immediately woke up worried about El but surely if something had happened she'd call first. He walked to the door and opened it.

Joyce was standing there looking frantically at him. "Joyce? What are

you doing here this time at night? Did something happen?" he asked and went for his carbine that rested near the door.

"No, no! Nothing happened. I-I had a nightmare. I simply had to come see you. I'm sorry." Joyce said with unleashed tears and a broken voice.

"Come here." he uttered gently after closing the door in her wake and placing his gun at its rightful place.

Joyce came closer to him and embraced him with averted eyes.

"What happened in your nightmare? Was it Bob again?" he patiently questioned.

"I-it was Bob at first. But then..." was disclosed from his chest she rested on.

"Then what? Go on. I've got you. Nothing will get to you or the boys. I'm here." he siad in her ear, caressing her back and hair with one hand and holding her close with the other. Her nightmares, it seemed, were getting worse. Worse than his, to need this comfort from him. To drive through the night to come to him...and all that he could do was hold her close.

"It was you. They got to you. And...there was nothing I could do, Hop. Nothing. I just stood there." she desperately said, a sob comming from her sore throat, cracking in two the deadly silence that could be heard through the cabin.

"I see." he sighed.

"Look, I'm here." he pressed his hands harder on her body to alert her to his prescence. He kissed her hair, his favorite place to be since their school days. "I'm here and I won't let anything get to you or Will or Jonathan. I'm here." he chanted in her ear, over and over again. Praying that his prescence and his voice would calm her.

"Oh Hop..." and started actively crying for Bob, out of grief, anger that all that happened to them left all of them scarred in a way but relief too, o recieve such comfort from Hopper. Even if she knew that the future was unpredictable and that he was a plain human, just

hearing that he was here with her, was enough to make her feel better. Rested. Calm.

She pulled back to see he had them sat on the couch and that she was sitting on his lap. His strong arms were still around her, creating a warm cocoon that protected from anything leering out there. He kissed her hair once more and turned to her.

"Better?"

"Yes. Thanks Hop."

After a while sitting comfortably with him, she asked " Do you get nightmares too?"

His blues were directed to her again. Heavy with emotionaly and physical exhaustion. "Yes. I do. And thinking that you're all safe at home eases my mind."

Neither smiled. No need to keep up appearances between them. They knew that thay were damaged in a way and the last year didn't help one bit. Their unresolved feelings were between them too but both disregarded them in order to offer comfort to the other. And Bob's death was still on their heads. Not their fault in any way but still...

"This eases my mind. You and me here. In your arms. I always loved your arms." she absentmidently said, not really thinking before speaking into the late night.

"They do?" he jokingly asked. " I know now why you liked me back then." he smiled, letting out a chuckle her way.

Joyce smiled back too. Her eyes collecting back the warmth and brilliance her nightmare had stole. "Not just for that. I just...oh, Hop."

"What?" he begged dumbfounded.

"I feel safe! When I'm with you I feel as if nothing will happen to me. Or the boys. You're...safety personificated." she said with a huff.

"I...I really don't know what to say to that." he exclaimed.

"Say nothing. Just, thank you Hopper. Thank you." she meaningfully uttered and nuzzled in his warm chest after leaving a kiss near the resting place of his heart.

"I-" and a small snore cut off whatever he was going to say. He smiled and carefully took her in his arms. He carried her carefully to his bed and both laid together.

Joyce momentarily woke up but when she sensed she was snuggled in Hopper's arms she relaxed once more and fell to a dreamless relaxing sleep in the arms of the man she secretly loved.

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A/N

And that's it! I'm not sure I should include 'the morning after'. What do you think? I like it the way it is. I'd love to hear what you think. Thank you!

Lot's of love,

Andriana, Greece